

People's Participation: A Catalyst for Stakeholder Governance in Democratic Nations

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INTRODUCTION

During 1970s International development agencies and developed nations experienced inadequate outcomes of development and failure in the usage of funds by the developing countries. Which they recommended that there is the lack of people's participation in the development activities. So, the emergence of 'participation' came from the development discourse by the declaration of basic need approach by International Labour Organisations (ILO). Initially participation strategies were focused on human resource development and then widened the focus in national development in 1980s. During 1990s participation was acknowledged as principle for development in most of the sectors in many countries and received support from Governments, IDAs, and NGOs (Okley, 1995: P.1)

Good Governance is an approach to government to dedicate justice and peace that protects individual's human rights and civil liberties. According to the United Nations, Good Governance is measured by the eight factors-Participation, Rule of Law, Transparency, Responsiveness, Consensus Oriented, Equity and Inclusiveness, Effectiveness and Efficiency, and Accountability.

Participation requires that all groups, particularly those most vulnerable, have direct or representative access to the systems of government. This manifests as a strong civil society and citizens with the freedom of association and expression. It determines that all men and women should have a voice in decision making, either directly and indirectly through elected representatives that represent their interest. Such type of participatory environment is formed when there is a freedom of association and speech, as well as capacities to participate constructively.

OBJECTIVES

- To contextualize the Stakeholder participation for Good Governance
- To study the structure of people's participation in India

METHODOLOGY

To accomplish the research aims, a qualitative methodology was employed. The nature of the research is both exploratory and descriptive. In developing nations such as India, the descriptive method assists in describing the means to eliminate current barriers to participation. Nonetheless, the exploratory technique reveals crucial phenomena, such as social and human phenomena in a socio-economic environment, which affects people's engagement and clarifies difficult issues and ambiguity.

Descriptive

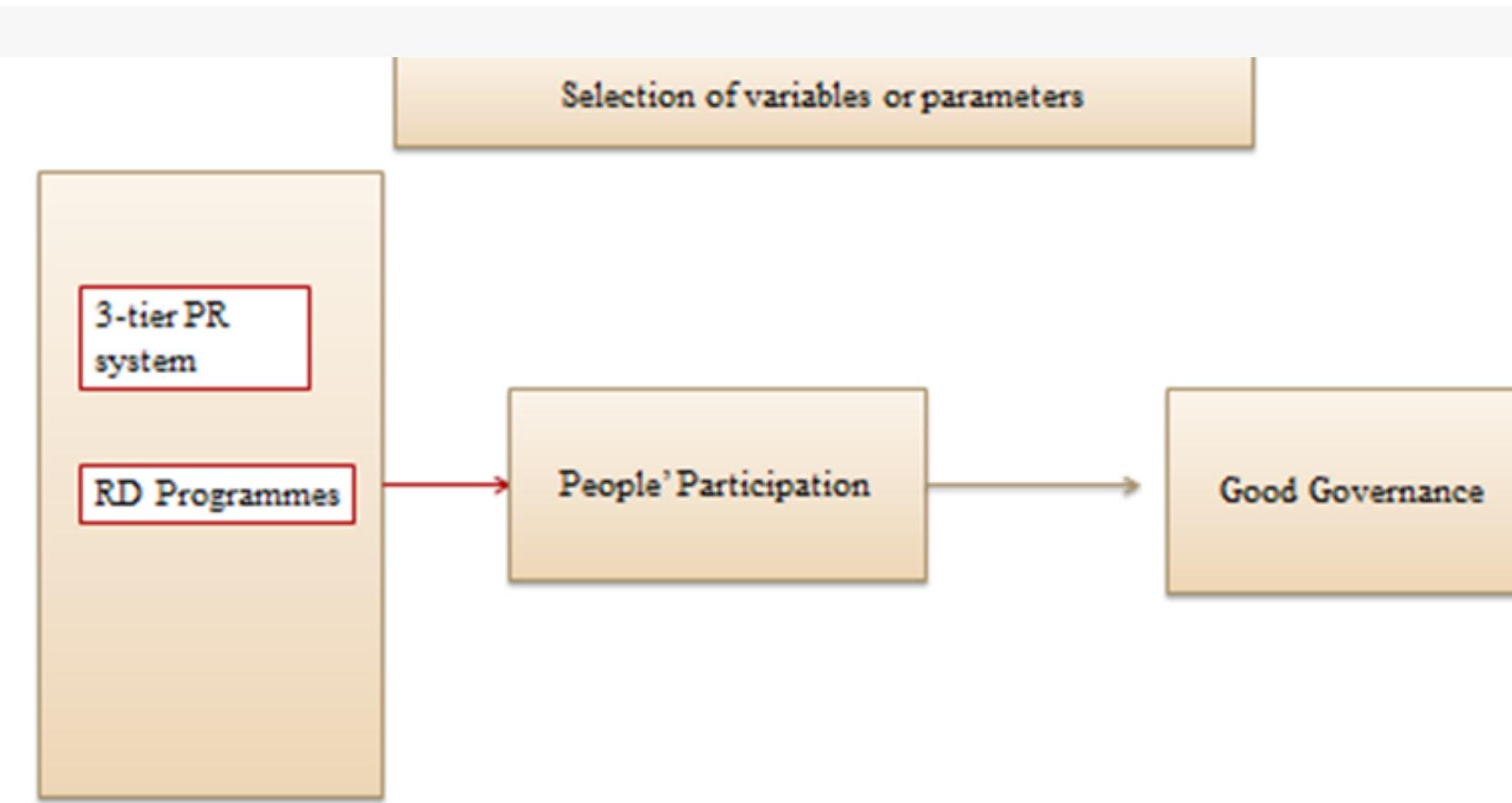
- Will outline existing people's participation in country

Exploratory

- Social and Human factors influencing people's participation
- Clarify complex issues
- Ambiguity

Case Study Framework is adopted

Focus on: Local Government bodies role in implementing development programmes, local stakeholders (Representatives, beneficiaries & bureaucrats)



People participation in Back to village



Photographs showing development works done through MGNERGA

Good Governance

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Participation

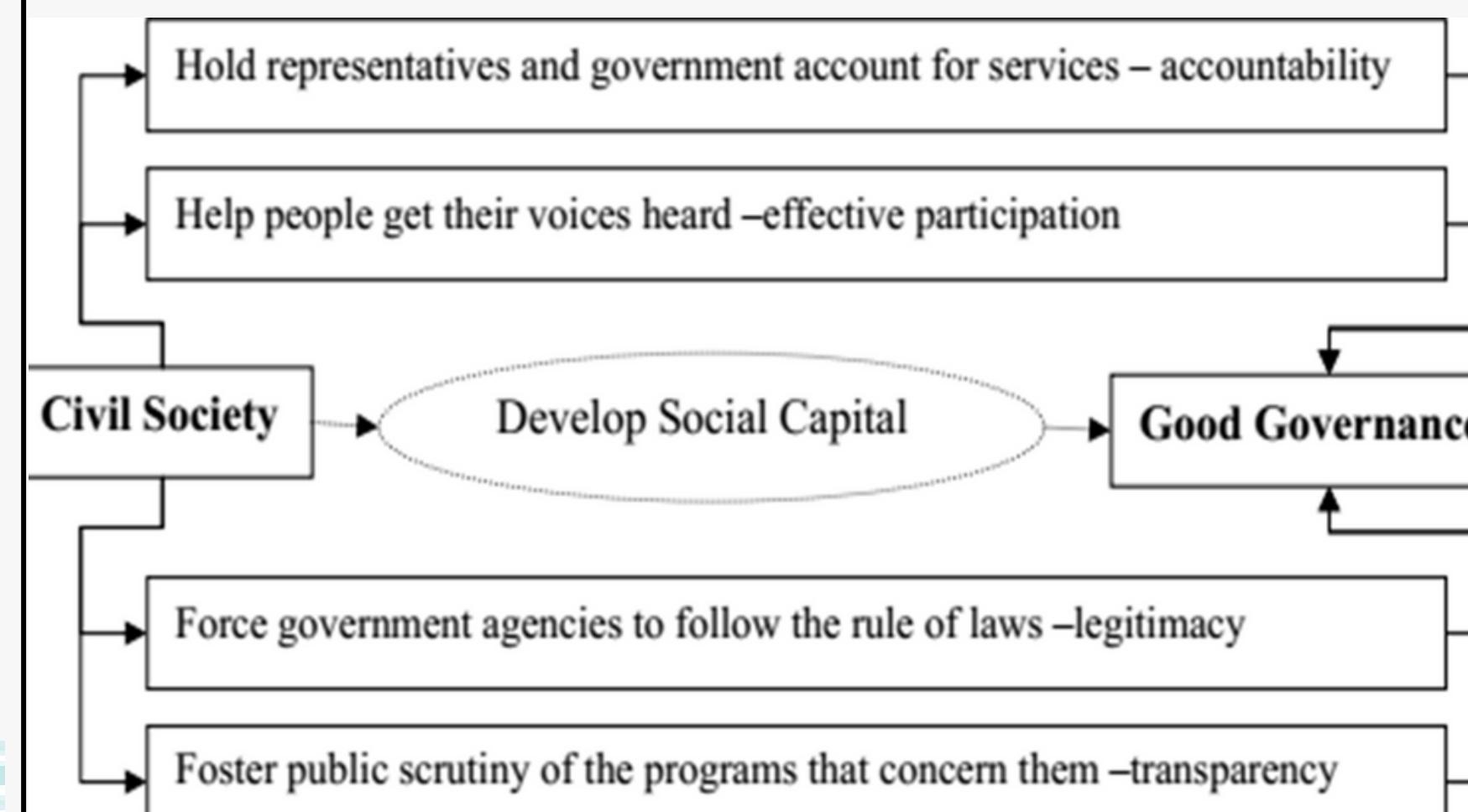
Participation was included to intend beneficiaries in development by aid donors was initiated by in 1980. In 1981, Sweden decided that participation was the basic right to be included in all its aid projects. In 1986 the German aid agency GTZ made the participation of the poor one of the principles in its work (Smith, 2007). The World Bank set up a learning Group on Popular Participation in 1990 to advise on how participation should be cooperated in the bank operation. The U.K's department for International Development began to include 'stakeholders' participation in its development projects in the first half of the 1990's (Smith, 2007). At the same time NGO's also start evaluates the project outcomes, analysis through participation and found that the solution of problems can be underpinned by the usage of local knowledge of the said community whom they are providing services (Smith, 2007). The four categories of participation are follows:



People's Participation Initiatives in Developing Countries

During 1996-2001 the World Bank started over 600 governance related programmes initiatives in 95 countries and was involved in supporting programmes of governance in 50 countries (Santiso, 2001). UNAID, supported about 60 governance programmes in mid 1990s all over the world and UNDP over 250 activities related to governance in different countries during 1990. (Blair 2000). The IMF has introduced Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) approach, for poverty reduction in developing countries with greater people's participation. The UNDP is running the Millennium Development Goal programmes in developing countries for improving governance and eradication of poverty. Now different developing countries are working individually to strengthen good governance keeping participation as a central element in improving the effectiveness for aid for example; Public Hearing Regulation in Thailand introduced in 1996 to ensure the people's participation in development programmes implementation. In Kenya, the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) approach has been used to mobilize community action in the implementation of development programmes (Karanja, 1998). In Indonesia, the 'forum wargas' has been formed to strengthen civil societies at local level. In Bolivia Vigilance Committee was formed locally at every municipal area to strengthen people's participation in local development programmes, there main duties are to make plan for local infrastructure investments and to monitor municipal budgets. (Blair 2000). In Nigeria single tier system within the local government bodies in 1996 was introduced.

Civil Society promoting of Good Governance



Structure of people's participation in India

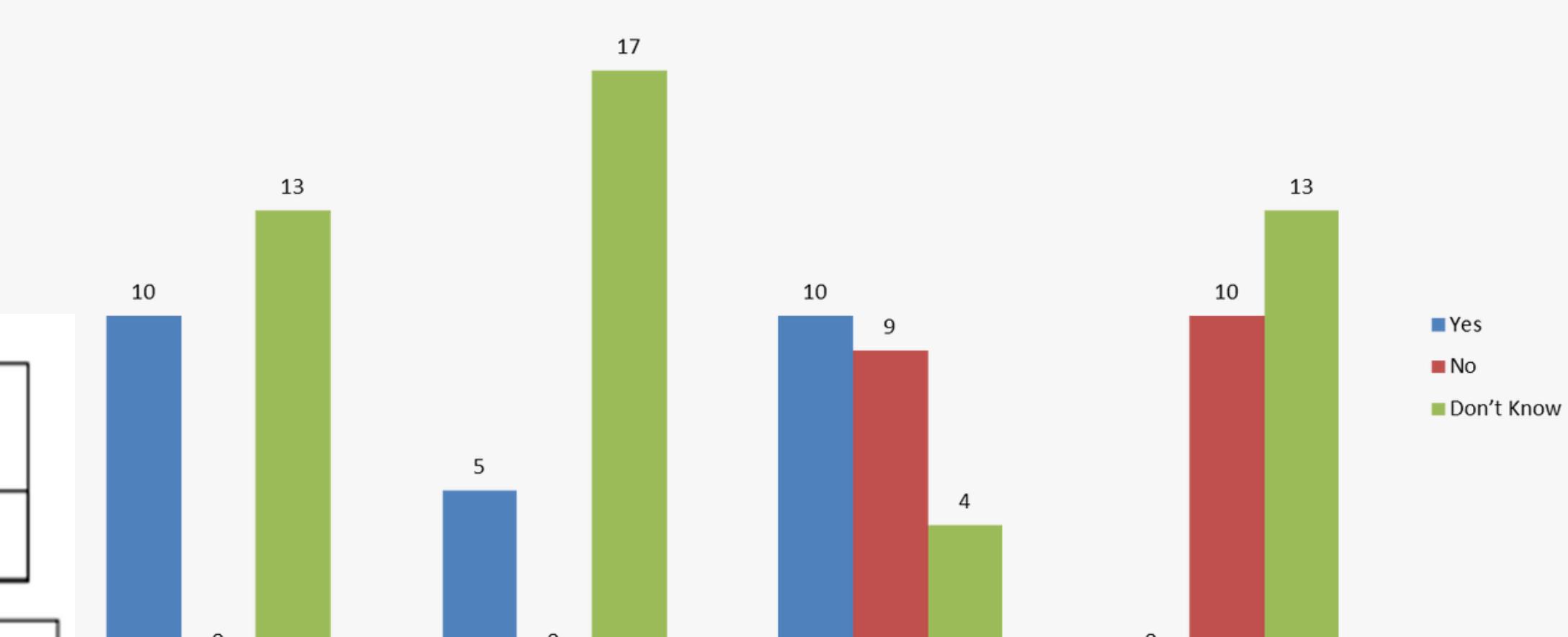
Direct Participation

The Local self-Governance Act of India provides spaces for direct participation of people at grassroots. Indian constitution has very clearly provided legal sanctity to direct participation of people through the Gram Sabha. Article 243 of the Constitution of India defines Gram Sabha as "a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to a village comprised within the area of Panchayat at the village level". The seventy 73rd Amendment Act to the constitution of India has made it compulsory to have a Gram Sabha, an institution of direct democracy, at the root of the institutional structure of Panchayati Raj.

Indirect participation

In India Gram Sabha elects members of Gram Panchayat, Chairperson of Gram Panchayat, member of block panchayat and the member of district panchayat. Chairpersons of block and district panchayats are not directly elected by the people. They are elected by elected members of respective tiers.

Elected Representatives' Responses on Transparency in PRI



ANALYSIS

Stakeholder's participation in the development

In this context the governance is concerned with management of development process, involving both public and private sectors. In short the involvement of all stakeholders^[1] of governance in policy cycle and service delivery. Here the participation of civil societies and private sector would be discussed in the context of socio-economic development of India.

Civil society and development in India

Civil society in India effectively promotes socioeconomic development. There are an estimated 3 million registered non-profit organisations as of 2012. Civil society advocacy groups have tried to give poor people more power. CSOs aid in the protection of the environment, human rights and ethnic identity.

Private sector in India's rapid growth

India has been among the fastest growing economies in the world for close to 2 decades (Ahluwalia, 2019:83). During 2014 and 2016 India's growth performance was 7.4% and 7.6% respectively and was highest among developing countries (CSO, 2016). I

CONCLUSION

True democracy ensures development of country, development here means both economic and human development. People's Participation which is the basic component of good governance on one hand empowers the people particularly rural population by participating in political institutions ensures the political development and other hand helps in socio-economic development of the society by taking part in decision making process through Gram Sabha. In India 73rd Amendment Act gave constitutional support to the local government bodies and made it mandatory for state governments to enhance the local government institution in rural areas. Panchayat Raj intuitions are made responsible for the implementation and monitoring of development programmes for effective rural development.

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